



Samabhavana Society

K.A.B.P STUDY ON MALE SEX WORKERS AND MASSUERS IN MUMBAI METRO

November 2001,

The study was accepted at:

- XIV international AIDS Conference-Barcelona-02, Abstract No WePeG6920.
- 2nd APCRSH-Bangkok-03
- AHRN Conference-Melborne-04,
- And special mention in Human Rights Watch report of July 20.14, No. 5 (C), www.hrw.org, Human Rights Watch, (2002), Epidemic of abuse: Police harassment of HIV/AIDS outreach workers in India. Human Rights Watch, 14 (5). July 2002

INTRODUCTION:

The highly mobile and invisible sub groups in the MSM sector is the Male sex workers and Malishwalas (masseurs) who are very active in the Mumbai metropolitan city and sex workers, are the ones who need to get paid in form of money but may also render services for kind.

The Male sex workers and the Malishwalas (masseurs) are present in every strata of the society, these mainly are in for money and some of them indulge for favours in kinds, which would mean that there are no condom negotiations in the system; they indulge high risk sex behaviour and the turnover ranges from one to four contacts in a day, which clearly indicates multipartner sex.

Most of the Malishwalas (masseurs) are paid for the services rendered for massage but double up as sex workers for which they get paid extra or in kind, again the condom negotiations is not prevalent and many a times the clients insists on, no condom usage cause when the negotiations on money are also not clear which also gives indication that condom negotiations will be the last on the agenda.

The Knowledge, Attitude, Behaviour, Perception (KABP) study was conducted amongst Male Sex Workers and its sub segments in Mumbai metro.

The study was perceived when condom distribution was being done over a period of three months and feedback of condom usage via an in depth interview (IDI) conducted with five such male sex workers, setting was informal the discussion format was completely free flowing and it was conducted on one on one basis and some times in groups of twos and threes.

It was perceived that in spite of condom being made available periodically there was no condom negotiations skills that where present, the setting was such that MSW could not negotiate price and sex was a part of ritualistic massage practice, it was also reported that sexual abuse and unprotected group sex was a norm.

The targeted group was Male sex workers and Masseurs (Malishwalas), the sub segment found amongst them where the bazaar boys, beauty Parlour boys, sex network of MSW controlled by pimps and educated young men from modeling industry and some such boys who would do it for extra pocket money.

It is clear that the HIV pandemic in India, as specifically extrapolated from the Mumbai metro scenario has a subterranean homosexual-MSM content and that; this unprotected male-to-male transmission is not being addressed.

- To motivate MSW and Malishwalas to adopt safe sex practices and to reduce high risk behavior
- To introduce condom negotiations skills.
- To provide high quality STI services at government hospital and/or enable MSW`s and Malishwalas to seek other appropriate services through a system of referral linkages

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- To provide a safe space and a non judgmental meeting ground for MSW and Malishwalas to participate in group discussions on safe and healthy sexual behaviors
- To develop a model for continuum of care for MSW and Malishwalas who are HIV positive

In order to begin interventions on the above it was necessary to understand the community better and hence a need for the study.

Objectives of the research

- To study the Knowledge of the community with regards to HIV/AIDS.
- To gauge their Attitude toward the Positive people and HIV aids in general
- To study their sexual behaviour practices
- To understand accessibility of condoms through their perspective
- To study psychosocial factors that lead to sexual abuse amongst their community.

TOP LINE FINDINGS:

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

- The Median age of the respondent was found to be 21 YRS
- Out of which 30% had never been to school, of which more than half (16%) are illiterate. The others can sign or are functionally literate. 48% of the respondent studied up to high school (10th std.)
- 57% of the respondent were unmarried and 43% were married
- The main Occupation of the respondent was: 55% Malishwalas, 21% service, 17% Unemployed,
- The Monthly Income of the respondents was that 32% drew up to Rs. 3000, 40% drew up to Rs. 6,000 per month, 14% drew more than 8000 per month
- The respondents accommodation was: 59% stayed with friends, 20% were with parents and siblings, 12% alone, 9% with wife and kids
- The respondents were mainly migrants and only 13% belong to Mumbai. The rest are mostly from the northern regions (67%) (UP, Bihar). There are very few from the southern state of TN and some from Srinagar (1.7%), Hyderabad (1.7), Surat (1), and Jammu (1).

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HIV

- The respondents response regarding knowledge about HIV/AIDS was that 38.3% answered as foreign disease (38.3), fatal disease (26.7), a micro-organism that causes AIDS (15.8), the rest only described it as an insect
- How is it transmitted: 1 (29.2), 2(89.2), 3(78.3), 4(80.8), 7(20%), 8(21%), 9(24%),
- Prevention of transmission of HIV: 1(29.2), 2(86.7), 3(64.2), 4(48.3)
- Perception of HIV: A killer disease (83.3), A virus (5.8), 10% (Other??)
- Whether there is a cure for HIV: 7% yes and 93% No

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT AIDS

- Respondents response for knowledge about AIDS was that 14.2% said: A condition where the body's immune system breaks down, a killer disease (61.7), a deadly virus (6.7), DK/CS (17.5)
- Their Perception of AIDS: Majority perceived AIDS as "Death", 9% did not know how to perceive it and 1% perceived it like a disease
- Of those who answered, 95% felt that there was no cure for AIDS while the remaining thought that there is a cure



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SUBSTANCE USE

- 53% consumed liquor /alcohol before sex. Of these majority (64%) reported consuming it occasionally. An equal number reportedly consume gutka/mawa, etc.

SEXUALITY

- Sex with other men: 76% always, rest sometimes Just 1 respondent reported never.
- Average no. of sex partners in the last one month : 11
- Sex with a female partner: Average 5 times in the last one month
- Average number of female partners: 2

PRACTICES PERTAINING TO SEX

- Wet kiss partner: 17 % never. The rest either frequently, rarely or sometimes
- Mutual masturbation: 17% never, 48% frequently, remaining, occasionally

ORAL SEX (PENNO-ORAL)

- 78% yes, rest no. One fourth indicated regular behaviour
- Did partner use condoms: 17% Yes. Of these only 8.3 % regular condom use
- 84% respondents let another person suck/lick their penis in the last one month. Only 16% condom use of which only 9% regular condom use

ORAL SEX WITH MALE PARTNER (ORAL-ANAL SEX)

- 39% had this behaviour
- 8% frequently licked another persons anus, the rest occasionally
- Except one respondent none other reported their partner to have used any protection like a condom dam
- 40% let partner have oral-anal sex with self, 14% regularly
- Here too, except one respondent, no one had used a protection

PENNO-ANAL SEX

- 92% respondents had inserted their penis into another person's anus in the past one month of which 57% indulged in this behaviour >5 times during the period
- 40% used a condom, 21% always, the rest occasionally
- 48% reported having their partner's penis inserted into their anus during the past one month. 32 % used condoms of which 18% regularly

SEX WITH FEMALE PARTNER

- 56% of respondents have had sex with female partner since the last one month, 17% regularly, 18% used a condom and out of those only 8 % regularly used it

PARTNER SEEKING

- Respondents would seek there sexual partners from: 25.8% Friends, 70.8% Sex network, and (25%) Chowpatty beach,
- There usual meeting place of sex partner was Beaches 29.2%,Clients with reference 5.8%, Restaurants and bars, Bazaar, gateway of India, beauty Parlour and Parties
- The place where respondents would indulge in sexual activity reported where as Home 60%, Beaches 9%, Cars and hotels 66.7%
- The respondents that received financial remuneration in exchange for cash/kind: 97% said YES

SEXUAL HEALTH

- The name of respondents suffered from STI's in the past 6 months where 24%
- Symptoms of the problem reported by them was 4.2% redness and swelling of groin, 13.3 % Intense itching in genitals

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- 79% Respondents had reported have taken treatment for the problem of which; Unani was 48%, Self medication 17.2%, Allopathy 20.7%, Homeopathy and Ayurvedic 6.9% respectively.
- No of respondents who had taken HIV test where 32%.the rest refused to mention where they went for it.

AVAILABILITY OF CONDOMS:

- One third find it easy to access condoms
- Reasons for condoms not being accessible: Too costly(27.5%), Not available near cruising place(60.8%), Clients don't have it during sex(68.2%), difficult to store(45%) do not get it late in the night(3%),
- None of them knew the correct steps of wearing a condom

CARE AND SUPPORT TOWARDS HIV +VE PERSONS

- 36% WILL BREAK OFF the relationship on learning of partners +ve status. The rest will maintain and continue the relationship. Majority 53% said that they would maintain contact so as to help as and when required
- Majority of the respondents perceived a persons who suffers from HIV to be near to death and that they feel sorry for the person
- Kind of support services that needs to be developed for the MSMs who are HIV +ve are: HIV testing facilities(67%), Counseling facilities for prevention(73%), counseling facilities for +ve(71%), hospices for +ve(89%), any kind of facility to help people, please give us more information,

PSYCHO SOCIAL PROBLEMS:

- When the respondents where asked if they ever had been forced to have sex with a man: 27% yes, 87% of them where frequently forced
- Respondents where forced to indulge in anal sex- 89% and 10% for oral sex
- A majority (92%) reported having undergone mental/physical trauma in their relationships. On probing deeper, the following responses emerged: "I was physically beaten, had a fight with him because no money was paid", "felt anger and frustration and felt like beating him but since he was a client it would be bad for business", "Felt dirty and angry and insulted", "He was a policeman and was forcing me to have sex with him", "I was bleeding and burned with cigarette butts".

About us:

Samabhavana Society is a registered Non Government Community Based Organization (NGCBO) with the Charity commissioner's office, Mumbai, Maharashtra, since year 2000; the board consists of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender person, parents of Gay people, Men and Women from the mainstream society. We primarily work in the sector of persons with alternate sexual preferences or lifestyle and one of our focal point areas is intervention with men who sell sex and their clients.

For information regards the organisation, please visit our organisational website:

www.samabhavanasociety.org